



NEWS RELEASE

Tennessee Regulatory Authority

Media Contact:

Greg Mitchell, 741-2904 ext. 131
Email: greg.mitchell@state.tn.us

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TRA Welcomes FCC Chairman Michael Powell to Tennessee

Nashville, Tennessee – The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) today welcomes Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Michael Powell and other FCC staff to Tennessee.

Chairman Powell's visit to Tennessee is part of a nationwide initiative to ensure rural communities have access to basic telephony services and to forward the deployment of advanced technologies, like high definition television (HDTV) and high-speed internet to rural communities.

"I applaud the efforts Chairman Powell has made to ensure that states with substantial rural populations, like Tennessee, have access to economic and social benefits brought about by digital communications," said TRA Chairman Debi Tate.

"Advanced communications technologies will enable the rural region of our state to remain vital, expand, and fully participate in the technology-based markets of the present and future."

Chairman Powell will attend tele-medicine presentations at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, moderated by Debi Tate, Chairman of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority and a member of the FCC's Joint Board on Advanced Technologies.

"We are honored that Chairman Powell is coming to hear more about what we are doing in Tennessee to make healthcare available to all areas of our state, and the exciting ways in which technology and digital communications are making that possible," said Tate.

Vanderbilt hosted President Bush several weeks ago to discuss electronic medical records. In addition, there will be presentations regarding tele-anesthesiology, behavioral health and a joint retina eye project between Vanderbilt and Bellsouth.

“Chairman Powell has been a true champion of technological innovation and now is encouraging its use not only as an economic and communications engine but more importantly for ‘science to service’ opportunities,” said Tate.

Later in the day, Powell and Tate will travel to Oak Ridge for a tour of Bechtel National, Inc. Bechtel National manages and operates the Y-12 National Security Complex for the Department of Energy. The tour will include the Homeland Security communications systems and other communications systems through the Y-12 Complex technology-based manufacturing centers.

On Wednesday, June 30th, Chairman Powell and Appalachian Regional Commission Federal Co-Chairman Anne Pope, along with Rural Utilities Service Administrator Hilda Legg and Tate will tour Digital Crossing, a non-profit organization, established to further enhance East Tennessee’s technology community and participate in a roundtable discussion with industry representatives.

On Wednesday afternoon, officials from the University of Tennessee’s Telehealth Network will meet Chairman Powell to discuss rural health care and services it provides to Appalachian counties using digital communications technologies.

“We hope to discuss future partnerships with the FCC, Rural health services and the Center for Mental Health to spread health care alternatives enabled by advanced technology to all Tennesseans.”

For more information on Chairman Powell’s initiative visit www.fcc.gov, the Appalachian Regional Commission at www.arc.gov, or the TRA at www.state.tn.us/tra.

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